

INSIDE TODAY
WORLD NEWS
STILL DETAINED



Carla Thompson, 53, of Meridian, Idaho, one of the 10 Americans who were arrested while trying to bus children out of Haiti without proper documents or government permission, arrives to court with her head covered as she is escorted by police in Port-au-Prince, Friday, Feb. 5, 2010.

.Read more on Page A8

SPORTS NEWS
SUPER BOWL XLIV



The Vince Lombardi Trophy, which is awarded to the winner of the Super Bowl, is shown before a news conference Friday, Feb. 5, 2010 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The New Orleans Saints will play the Indianapolis Colts in Super Bowl XLIV Sunday, Feb. 7, at Sun Life Stadium in Miami.

Read more on Page A13

OIL
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 ↓0.95

Snow storm bears down on capital

NAFEESA SYEED,
 Associated Press Writer
 WASHINGTON (AP) — Shoppers emptied stores of milk, bread and shovels ahead of a monster snow storm bearing down Friday on the eastern US, with 30 inches or more forecast for the U.S. capital.

The federal government sent workers home early and subways ran light as people stayed home.

The region's second snow storm in less than two months could be "extremely dangerous," the National Weather Service said. Heavy, wet snow and strong winds would make travel hazardous as the storm gains strength into Friday night.

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Employees of the Architect of the U.S. Capitol shovel the steps and treat it with ice melter, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Friday, Feb. 5, 2010, as snow began to fall in Washington area. The region's second snow storm in less than two months could be 'extremely dangerous,' and heavy, wet snow and strong winds threatened to knock out power, the National Weather Service said.

Associated Press

"Tea party" activists hold first convention

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — The activists who are attending the first national "tea party" convention this weekend all agree: Government is too big. Spending is out of control. Individual freedom is at risk. And President Barack Obama's policies are making it all worse.

But that's where the consensus ends among the diverse groups of frustrated Americans who count themselves part of this fledgling coalition.

"We're afraid and we're fed up and we're angry," says Donna Henton of Blair, Nebraska. "But where this is going to go, we just don't know."

If the people attending the convention here are uncertain, imagine the difficulties of the Republican and Democratic parties, both of which are trying to leverage this antiestablishment energy for their own gain. How it works out could make a big difference in elections in November when control of Congress will be at stake.

Continued on Next Page



Mark Skoda, a talk radio host who founded a Memphis "tea party" group and helped organize the National Tea Party Convention speaks during a news conference in Nashville, Friday, Feb. 5, 2010. Skoda announced the creation of the Ensuring Liberty Corp., and an affiliated political action committee aimed at electing up to 20 candidates this fall.

Associated Press

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Former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore addresses the National Tea Party Convention in Nashville, Friday, Feb. 5, 2010.

TEA PARTY

Continued from Front Page

Here's what's clear: This is an ideological mix of libertarianism and conservatism with the common denominator being lower spending and smaller government. This is a loose collection of citizen groups with no leader but many voices. And this is the product of long-simmering anger. The convention itself has had its controversies. It's a for-profit gathering organized by Nashville lawyer Judson Phillips at the sprawling Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Convention Center. Some would-be attendees balked at the \$549 ticket price and ex-Alaska Gov. Sarah

Palin's \$100,000 fee to give the keynote address Saturday night, worried the cost was sully the grass-roots image and preventing activists from attending. Still, the three-day event for some 600 people is intended to try to turn grass-roots activism into ballot-box achievement. It includes sessions about involving young people in the conservative movement, using primaries to defeat liberalism and unifying the movement's many groups. Is the movement just a blip? Or will it emerge as a lasting political powerhouse shaping elections and government for years to come? "This movement is beginning to mature ... not as a third party

but a force to be reckoned with in the traditional party structure," declared Mark Skoda, a talk radio host who founded a Memphis "tea party" group and helped organize the convention.

Yet, candidates who have adopted the "tea party" slogan are running as independents in campaigns nationwide. There are "tea party" groups that insist the convention hosts don't speak for them. And viewpoints among attendees here vary.

Some participants see the coalition as a way to strengthen the grassroots in the Republican Party. Others describe it as a people movement that is not about ideology or even party politics.

Ty Reynolds, 34, of Topeka, Kansas, put it this way: "It's about individual liberty vs. government control. Leave me alone and stop taxing me so much and be responsible stewards of the people's money."

In Washington, both major parties have struck a cautious stance, seemingly not sure what to make of the coalition but nonetheless trying to use it.

Republicans have sought to cajole the coalition into their fold. Party Chairman Michael Steele has even called himself a member. Party leaders know

that a conservative third party could threaten Republicans' electoral chances by splitting the right-flank vote and triggering Democratic victories. It happened in an upstate New York congressional race last fall in a region which Democrats had not won for more than a century.

Democrats, at times, have sought to demonize the coalition, casting it as an extreme right-wing part of the Republican Party. But Obama, himself, has stepped lightly, mindful that the members' anger is real, and among their ranks are independent voters and even moderate Democrats.

What's taking place is at least somewhat similar to other modern political uprisings including the supporters of businessman Ross Perot who ran as an independent presidential candidate in the 1990s. Much like the "tea party" contingent, his supporters were largely white and middle class, a demographic Obama didn't win during the 2008 campaign and has struggled to win over since he took office.

"Tea parties" popped up last spring in small towns and big cities alike as disillusioned Americans — many never before involved in politics — protested the \$787 billion

economic stimulus measure, Wall Street bailouts and Obama's health care plan.

The coalition was tagged as extremist because of disruptions during health care town hall meetings hosted last summer by members of Congress and signs like "Bury Obamacare with Kennedy" that sprouted at a Washington rally last fall following Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's death. Local leaders have struggled over the coalition's direction. There's even dispute over the name's origin: Some insist it was drawn from the 1773 tax revolt known as the Boston Tea Party, others say it's an acronym for "taxed enough already."

In 1773, around 200 colonists, incensed that the English crown was demanding payment of duties on cargoes of tea in three British ships, stormed the ships in Boston Harbor and threw the boxes of tea overboard. The event protested what the colonists considered taxation without representation.

"This is about giving voice to a people who don't feel they're being represented by either party. But it's too early to tell how this is all actually going to play out," said Nancy Hiser, 26, of Findlay, Ohio. "The only consensus here is that everyone is probably opposed to the Obama agenda." □

SNOWSTORM

Continued from Front Page

Two highways deaths were blamed on snow as the storm started in Virginia. Light flakes started falling around noon in downtown D.C. as forecasters warned 30 inches or more of heavy, wet snow, accompanied by powerful winds, could fall through Saturday in Washington, Baltimore and surroundings. It could be the heaviest snowfall since January 1922 in the U.S. capital.

Airlines canceled flights across the region and school districts closed for the day ahead of the winter storm forecast from Virginia and West Virginia across Maryland into southern New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Some flights at Reagan National Airport were delayed Friday morning. At least 18 afternoon flights were canceled, including those run by Delta and US Airways.

Residents in the Washington area scrambled for food and supplies, but many found they were too late.

In Alexandria, Virginia, James Ivery, 60, and his wife had already bought supplies but were back at a supermarket Friday morning to get out of the house one last time before the storm. Many shelves and bins were emptied of milk, vegetables, eggs and cold cuts.

"It just seems like people are panicking. I don't think it's going to be too bad," Ivery said. "As long as I got power and satellite service, I'll be fine."

The federal government, the region's largest employer, told workers they could take Friday off as unplanned leave and prepared to shut offices four hours early.

Metro, the Washington-area rail system, said ridership Friday morning was about 23 percent less than on the

same day last week, a sign people were heeding official warnings to stay home. Metro warned it would likely have to close all but the underground portions of the system during the storm. Trains cannot operate outside when snow accumulations reach 8 inches because the snow cuts off access to the electrified third rail that powers the trains.

President Barack Obama's is set to speak Saturday at the winter meeting of the Democratic National Committee. White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said Obama would likely be able to keep his scheduled appearance because the delegates were already in town and meeting at a hotel near the White House. On Sunday, Obama plans to host a party to watch the Super Bowl, the U.S. pro football championship game, as he did last year. His guests will include lawmakers of both parties and military service members.

This time around, Obama is not quipping about Washington residents' supposed lack of winter toughness as he did shortly after taking office last year when many schools canceled classes one day because of ice.

"I think even a transplanted Hawaiian-to-Chicago has sufficient respect for a forecast of nearly two feet of snow," Gibbs said Friday.

Across the region, state officials were deploying thousands of trucks and employees and had hundreds of thousands of tons of salt at the ready.

Blizzard warnings were in effect in much of Delaware and southern New Jersey from Friday afternoon to Saturday night, with strong winds and blowing, drifting snow.

Philadelphia could get about a foot of snow and 12 to 20 inches are expected in the Pittsburgh area.

The combination of wet snow and strong winds could make conditions even more treacherous than a Dec. 19 storm that dumped more than 16 inches of snow on Washington.

Snowfalls of this magnitude — let alone two in one season — are rare in the area. According to the National Weather Service, Washington has gotten more than a foot of snow only 13 times since 1870. The heaviest on record was 28 inches in January 1922. But the biggest snowfall is believed to have occurred in 1772, before official records were kept, when as much as 3 feet fell in the Washington-Baltimore area. Both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson mentioned the event in their diaries, according to the weather service.

Virginia's General Assembly canceled Friday's floor



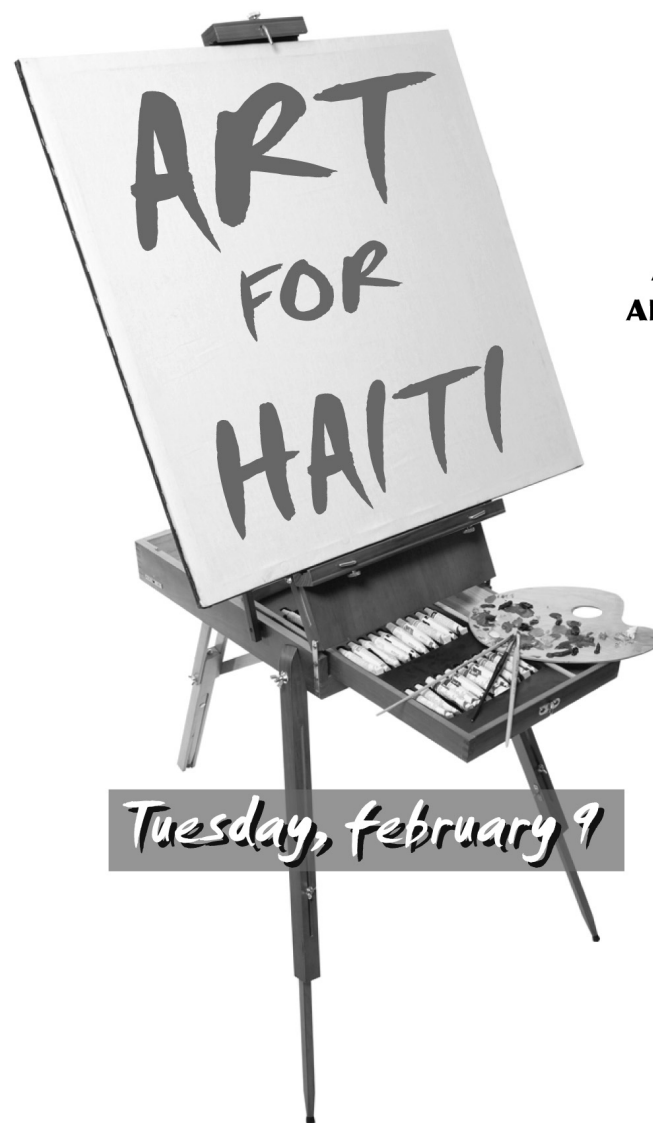
Pat Cammarata, right, of Parkville, Md. buys de-icing chemicals at a hardware store in Baltimore Friday, Feb. 5, 2010 in preparation for the massive snow storm expected to hit the area.

Associated Press

sessions and committee meetings, the first time anyone could remember that the threat of snow had sent the whole legislature home.

Southwest Airlines canceled Friday afternoon flights at Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington airports. Amtrak canceled most trains heading

south from Washington, D.C. Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell, who has been in office less than a month, declared his second snow emergency, authorizing state agencies to assist local governments. The assistance includes deploying National Guard soldiers and emergency response teams. □



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Obama admits health care overhaul may die



ERICA WERNER,

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama, who insisted he would succeed where other presidents had failed to fix the U.S. health care system, now concedes the effort may die in Congress.

The president's newly conflicting signals could frustrate Democratic lawmakers who are hungry for guidance from the White House as they try to salvage the effort to extend coverage to millions of uninsured Americans and hold down spiraling medical costs. Obama's comments Thursday night came hours

after Republican Scott Brown was sworn in to replace the late Edward M. Kennedy, leaving Democrats without their obstacle-proof majority in the Senate, and Obama's signature health legislation with no clear path forward.

"I think it's very important for us to have a methodical, open process over the next several weeks, and then let's go ahead and make a decision," Obama said at a Democratic National Committee fundraiser.

"And it may be that ... if Congress decides we're not going to do it, even after all the facts are laid out, all the options are clear, then the

American people can make a judgment as to whether this Congress has done the right thing for them or not," the president said. "And that's how democracy works. There will be elections coming up, and they'll be able to make a determination and register their concerns." It was a shift in tone for the issue the "Yes we can" candidate campaigned on and made the centerpiece of his domestic agenda last year. In a speech to a joint session of Congress in September, Obama declared: "I am not the first president to take up this cause, but I am determined to be the last. ... Here and now we will meet history's test."

Sweeping health legislation to extend medical coverage to more than 30 million uninsured Americans passed the House and Senate last year and was on the verge of completion — though there were still disagreements between the two houses — before Brown's upset victory last month in a special election in Massachusetts. Since then it has been in limbo, and Obama has not publicly offered

specifics to help lawmakers move forward. Congressional aides felt his remarks Thursday did not clarify matters.

"The next step is what I announced at the State of the Union, which is to call on our Republican friends to present their ideas. What I'd like to do is have a meeting whereby I'm sitting with the Republicans, sitting with the Democrats, sitting with health care experts, and let's just go through these bills. ... And then I think that we've got to go ahead and move forward on a vote," Obama said Thursday shortly after a White House meeting with Democratic congressional leaders that produced no apparent progress on health care.

"I think we should be very deliberate, take our time. We're going to be moving a jobs package forward over the next several weeks; that's the thing that's most urgent right now in the minds of Americans all across the country."

"Here's the key, is to not let the moment slip away," Obama also said.

White House press secretary

Robert Gibbs told reporters Friday that there was no meeting set for the president to talk over health care strategy with Republican and Democratic lawmakers. The Republicans have shown more interest in opposing Democrats on the issue than in working with them.

Bipartisan congressional leaders are planning to join Obama at the White House on Tuesday, but Gibbs reiterated that the meeting will be centered on how to create jobs and boost the economy. Gibbs said White House officials are "still working with Capitol Hill on the best way forward" on health care.

Rank-and-file Democrats are eager for their leaders to settle on a strategy by the end of next week, after which lawmakers will return to their states for a weeklong recess during which they are sure to face questions from constituents. The health legislation has become unpopular with voters and a political drag in an election year, with congressional and gubernatorial voting set for November. □

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Twin blasts kill 40 Shiite pilgrims in Iraq

CHELSEA J. CARTER

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD (AP) — A car bomb ripped through a crowd of Shiite pilgrims outside the holy city of Karbala Friday, sending many fleeing into the path of a suicide attacker who detonated a second bomb in coordinated blasts that killed at least 40 people and wounded 150.

The twin bombing came on the final day of an annual Shiite religious observance, which has been the target of three large-scale attacks in Iraq this week alone. In Pakistan, two bombs targeting Shiites observing the same holy day Friday killed at least 25 people and wounded around 100 more.

The bloodshed in Iraq is likely to further stoke tensions between the Shiite-led government and Sunnis over the push to ban some candidates from March 7 parliamentary elections. The U.S. is concerned the ban could destabilize Iraq, crippling efforts to reconcile majority Shiites and Sunnis



who dominated Iraq until Saddam Hussein's ouster in 2003.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Friday's blasts, but Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki blamed al-Qaida and Saddam loyalists, saying in a statement the two groups failed to ignite

sectarian strife and destabilize the country with the attacks on pilgrims.

Shortly after noon, a parked car bomb exploded on a road clogged with pilgrims 6 miles (10 kilometers) east of one of three main entrances to the holy city of Karbala, two health ministry officials said. The explosion sent throngs of pilgrims running down the highway and straight into the path of a suicide car bomber who detonated a second

vehicle, they said.

At least 154 people were wounded in the consecutive blasts, the officials said.

An Iraqi police official gave a different version of events, saying two mortar rounds struck the area, driving pilgrims into the path of the suicide car bomber. Such conflicting accounts are common in the chaotic aftermath of bombings in Iraq.

The officials all spoke on condition of anonymity

because they were not authorized to release the information.

The twin blasts came at the height of the pilgrimage when roads around Karbala, 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of Baghdad, were clogged with people trying to reach the city by Friday to observe the climax of Arbaceen — the holy day marking the end of 40 days of mourning that follow the anniversary of the death of Imam Hussein, a revered Shiite figure.

The number of Shiites — estimated in the millions — makes the annual observance a prime target for suspected Sunni militants. In each of the past two years, attacks during the ceremonies killed around 60 pilgrims, down from the more than 340 killed in 2007.

Two other major attacks this week targeted Shiite pilgrims, killing at least 77 people.

Also Friday, a roadside bomb struck a bus carrying pilgrims through Baghdad, killing two and wounding 13, police and hospital officials said on condition of anonymity.

Iraqis angered by the violence questioned how anyone managed to plant bombs in an area where the government had deployed an additional 30,000 security forces and brought in the use of bomb-sniffing dogs and other intelligence and surveillance equipment.

Mohammad Rahim, a 40-year-old restaurant worker in Karbala, accused the government of being too preoccupied with political infighting ahead of the elections to ensure security for the pilgrims.

"The Iraqi government is busy with elections in this period," he said. "The security forces are not focused on security."

The attacks were likely to further strain relations between al-Maliki's government and Iraq's Sunni politicians over the push to ban some 450 candidates from next month's election.

The ban — which would have affected candidates with suspected ties to Saddam's outlawed Baath party — was overturned Wednesday by an appeals court. □

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15 dead, homes flooded in central Mexico

GUSTAVO RUIZ

Associated Press Writer

MORELIA, Mexico (AP)

— Fifteen people — including five children — died this week in severe and unseasonable winter storms that closed schools and freeways in central Mexico and flooded thousands of homes, authorities reported Friday.

The heavy rain storms — unusual in Mexico's normally dry winter season — sent rivers over their banks in the states of Michoacan and neighboring Guanajuato, where the deaths occurred Wednesday and Thursday.

Michoacan Interior Secretary Fidel Calderon Torreblanca said several people are still missing and that at least 2,000 homes were damaged. The federal government declared three

Michoacan townships disaster zones, a move that allows them access to federal disaster-relief funds.

The rains also slammed Mexico City and the neighboring State of Mexico, where open sewage canals overflowed and containment banks collapsed. A mix of drain water and sewage flowed into thousands of homes and blocked major thoroughfares in the metropolis of 20 million people. About 7,500 homes were flooded in the metropolitan area, prompting emergency personnel to ferry people from their homes through chest-high water.

Crews were working Friday to drain flooded areas and put sand bags around the damaged drainage channels.



Men stands on a truck stuck in a flooded street after heavy rains in in Nezahualcoyotl, Thursday, Feb. 4, 2010.

Skies cleared Friday, and the rains were forecast to stop by the weekend. Rain in central Mexico falls almost exclusively between May and October.

Mexico City lies in an enclosed mountain valley where flooding has been a problem for centuries. Authorities over time have dug deeper and

larger drainage tunnels to try to solve the problem, but experts have warned that even those may not be sufficient to handle extremely heavy rainfalls. □



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Covering his face, Drew Culberth, 34, of Topeka, Kansas, one of the 10 Americans who were arrested while trying to bus children out of Haiti without proper documents or government permission, arrives to court escorted by police in Port-au-Prince, Friday, Feb. 5, 2010. The 10 Americans were charged with child kidnapping and criminal association on Thursday.

Associated Press

No early release for U.S. missionaries in Haiti

FRANK BAJAK

Associated Press Writer

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Ten U.S. Baptist missionaries charged with child kidnapping returned to jail Friday after failing to persuade a judge to grant them provisional release pending the outcome of their case, their lawyer said.

The weary looking Americans were led one by one into the back of a police van after spending half the day at a courthouse in the rubble-strewn capital. A judge scheduled three more days of hearings next week, starting Monday, defense attorney Edwin Coq told reporters. Haitian officials at the court declined to answer questions from journalists about the case. The missionaries did not respond to questions and Coq said they had been ordered by the judge not to discuss their case.

The lawyer said that at least nine of the Americans — all but the group's leader, Laura

Silsby — clearly did not know they lacked the proper papers to remove 33 children from Haiti following the devastating earthquake and they should be immediately released.

"They came to Haiti to help. They came in solidarity," he said. "It is scandalous that they are being detained."

Prior to the closed hearing, Coq told reporters he would ask the judge to grant the detainees "provisional release," a type of bail without money posted. He said they should be allowed to leave Haiti until their trial, a date for which has not been established.

An investigating judge charged the Americans on Thursday with kidnapping for trying to take the 33 children across the border into the Dominican Republic on Jan. 29 without documentation.

Coq says Silsby knew she couldn't take the youngsters without proper paperwork. But he characterized the other nine missionaries as innocents caught up in actions they

didn't understand.

The Baptist group, most of whose members are from two Idaho churches, insisted they were rescuing abandoned children and orphans after the Jan. 12 quake.

But at least 22 of the children, ranging in age from 2 to 12, have parents. Some of the parents told The Associated Press they gave them up willingly because the missionaries promised the children a better life.

Each of the missionaries is charged with one count of kidnapping, which carries a sentence of five to 15 years in prison, and one of criminal association, punishable by three to nine years. Coq said the case was assigned a judge and a verdict could take three months.

"Obviously this is a matter for the Haitian judicial system," U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Friday. Clinton's husband, former U.S. President Bill Clinton, now a special U.N. envoy to Haiti, met with President Rene Preval in Port-au-Prince on Friday, but said his visit had nothing to do with the detained Americans.

Later, Clinton said the U.S. and Haitian governments should try to resolve the issue quickly.

"I think what's important now is that the government of Haiti and the government of the United States to get together and go through this because the government of Haiti, as I understand it, is not looking for a fight. They just want to protect children," he said during a visit to an AIDS clinic.

"The only thing I ask is both sides try to work through it as soon as possible."

Three national leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention sent a letter Friday to President Barack Obama urging him to "do everything within the authority of your office to secure a safe return home" for the detainees. □

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New Belfast pact faces many tests, little trust

SHAWN POGATCHNIK

Associated Press Writer

HILLSBOROUGH, Northern Ireland (AP) — A breakthrough deal to save Northern Ireland's Catholic-Protestant government has given a new lease of life to an awkward partnership of former foes that still must overcome many obstacles to survive.

The prime ministers of Britain and Ireland stood beside Irish Catholic leader Martin McGuinness and British Protestant leader Peter Robinson on Friday as they heralded a deal that was 2 1/2 years of argument — and 10 days and nights of exhausting negotiations — in the making.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown told both men they had completed an unlikely journey from warlords to practical politicians, and in the process helped consign to history a four-decade conflict that left 3,700 dead.

"We are in a new, more mature age of politics in Northern Ireland. People have looked over the abyss and said there must be no return to the past," Brown said at a news conference alongside Robinson, a one-time Protestant militant, and McGuinness, former commander of the outlawed Irish Republican Army.

McGuinness' Sinn Fein party had threatened to withdraw from power-sharing — shattering the central institution of Northern Ireland's 1998 peace accord — unless Robinson's Democratic Unionists stopped blocking plans to create a new Justice Department in Belfast that would oversee law and order in this long-divided society.

Friday's deal commits the Northern Ireland Assembly to elect a justice minister March 9 and Britain to transfer control of more than 20 criminal justice and law-enforcement agencies to Belfast on April 12. The governments of Britain, Ireland and the U.S. long have pressed for this to happen as the last logical step in building a unity government that both majority Protestants and minority Catholics can

support. Protestants opposed the move, in part, because they loathe the notion of former IRA figures having any role in overseeing justice.

Britain eased the Protestants' concerns with a staggering promise to give an extra 800 million pounds (\$1.3 billion) to cover the costs of establishing the Justice Department and a range of exceptional policing costs.

"I want to applaud all the parties for ultimately choosing negotiation over confrontation. In finalizing this deal, Peter Robinson and Martin McGuinness and their teams displayed the kind of leadership that the people of Northern Ireland deserve," said U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who kept in touch with the negotiations by telephone.

Yet Belfast political analysts agree that trust, the critical glue for real cross-community cooperation, remains in dangerously short supply. Friday's deal sets a series of diplomatic and security hurdles that the Catholic-Protestant coalition must clear in the high-pressure weeks ahead to avoid another breakdown.

The Protestant side agreed to drop its veto on forging a Justice Department only on condition that Sinn Fein reopened negotiations on the most divisive tradition in Northern Ireland society — summertime marches by tens of thousands of hard-line Protestants in the Orange Order brotherhood.

The Democratic Unionists, whose leaders themselves are mostly Orangemen, want restrictions imposed by British authorities a decade ago to be lifted, so that Protestants can resume their tradition of parading past the most hard-line Irish Catholic nationalist parts of Northern Ireland. The practice triggered widespread rioting when last permitted in the mid-1990s. This year's first restricted parades happen at Easter, the bulk in July.

"There is always in a peace deal like this an outstanding issue, something that is deferred until later. In this case it's the parades issue," said Belfast commentator and

author Malachi O'Doherty, who noted that power-sharing leaders have yet to demonstrate they can govern "without drama and without crisis."

Friday's agreement specifies, as its first act, that the Northern Ireland Assembly should create an all-party committee Monday that will review current systems for managing, mediating and restricting Protestant parades. The panel must recommend reforms by Feb. 23 — an exceptionally tight deadline that the Democratic Unionists demanded precede the election of any justice minister.

Catholic politicians warned that, if that committee cannot reach an agreement that addresses Protestant demands for greater marching freedoms



British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, second left, reacts with Peter Rosbinson, Northern Ireland First Minister, center, and Martin McGuinness Northern Ireland Deputy First Minister at Hillsborough Castle, Northern Ireland, Friday, Feb. 5, 2010. The prime ministers of Britain and Ireland unveiled a breakthrough agreement Friday that saves Northern Ireland's Catholic-Protestant unity government.

Associated Press

this summer, the Democratic Unionists could withhold essential support for electing a justice minister — throwing the coalition back into the crisis it has just escaped. □

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FILE - In this Nov. 23, 2009 file picture, Dr. Conrad Murray arrives at his clinic in Houston. Michael Jackson's physician has arrived in Los Angeles in anticipation of a decision from the district attorney's office on whether to charge him for the singer's death, a spokeswoman said Tuesday Feb. 2, 2010.

(AP Photo/Pat Sullivan, File)

By **LINDA DEUTSCH**
and **THOMAS WATKINS**,
Associated Press Writers

LOS ANGELES — Michael Jackson's doctor wanted to seek his day in court Friday by surrendering before being charged in the singer's death, but prosecutors upstaged

Jackson death case to be filed Monday

the plan by announcing that no case would be filed until next week. District attorney's spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons released the plan less than two hours before Dr. Conrad Murray and his attorneys were going to show up at an airport-area courthouse in an effort to force the prosecution's hand while avoiding having the physician arrested and handcuffed.

Gibbons' statement did not mention Murray, but said information on charges will be released after the case is filed on Monday. A news conference that had been scheduled Friday afternoon by Murray's defense team in lieu of his surrender was canceled an hour before it was to begin at a park near the courthouse. Murray's attorneys have said they expect the Texas cardiologist to be charged with involuntary manslaughter for administering drugs to Jackson before his death on June 25. It was not immediately

clear if Murray would return to Houston, where he has a practice, or remain in Los Angeles through the weekend. Lead defense attorney Ed Chernoff spoke Thursday with prosecutor David Walgren and was told to be at the courthouse at 1:30 p.m. PST Friday, only to have the county sheriff's department, which handles court security, publicly say hours later that it was called off, defense team spokeswoman Miranda Sevcik said earlier Friday.

"What does it take to surrender in L.A.?" Sevcik said. "I feel like Ed should show up in the courthouse with a big white flag." Walgren declined to comment Friday. The legal gamesmanship over Murray's surrender followed several days of negotiations in which his lawyers tried to arrange with prosecutors for the doctor to surrender for booking and arraignment. Those plans were derailed by haggling between prosecutors and law

enforcement officials over whether the physician should be arrested or allowed to turn himself in.

"It seems ridiculous to us that it's been dragging on this long," Sevcik said. "We've been here all week long, for God's sake. What's the holdup? To us this is showmanship and we are just done." In the seven months since Jackson's sudden death at 50 while rehearsing for a major comeback concert series, Murray has largely stayed out of view. His lawyers have spoken very little. And prosecutors and investigators have been tightlipped.

Sevcik said prosecutors told Murray on Thursday he'd face one count of involuntary manslaughter.

Murray became the focus of the probe into Jackson's death shortly after he called 911 on June 25 to report that the singer wasn't breathing. Murray told police he gave the Jackson a powerful anesthetic and other sedatives that were

blamed on his death. The doctor maintains nothing he gave Jackson should have killed him but sees a charge as inevitable, Sevcik said.

"We know he's going to be charged with involuntary manslaughter and we are ready with a counter argument," Sevcik said. "He's not guilty — that's our argument."

Various factors weighed into the desire of the Los Angeles Police Department to arrest Murray, including the possibility he might flee before arraignment, just as O.J. Simpson did, a law enforcement official close to the investigation told The Associated Press.

Top brass at the LAPD, which spent the past seven months investigating Murray, were unhappy with the idea of him surrendering because it could appear Murray was being given special treatment, according to the official who was not authorized to speak publicly and requested anonymity. □



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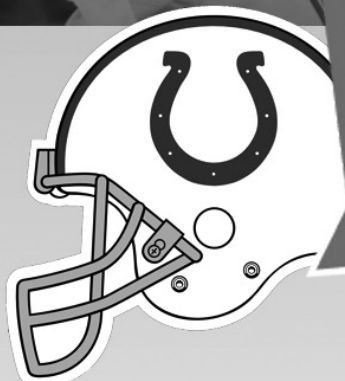
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America's Cup finally turns from court to sailing

BERNIE WILSON

AP Sports Writer

VALENCIA, Spain (AP) — They're finally going to sail the America's Cup.

A dispute between two of the world's richest men that kept sailing's marquee regatta locked up in court has been resolved to the point that two-time defending champion Alinghi and American challenger BMW Oracle Racing of California will begin their best-of-three showdown off the coast of Valencia on Monday, weather-permitting. It could be quite a show. BMW Oracle Racing, owned by software tycoon Larry Ellison, will sail the trimaran USA. The



The BMW Oracle Racing yacht sails off the coast of Valencia, Spain, on Thursday, Feb. 4, 2010. The 33rd America's Cup is scheduled to start on Feb. 8.

Swiss, headed by biotech mogul Ernesto Bertarelli, will counter with Alinghi 5, a catamaran. Both are 90 feet long and capable of sailing at three times the speed of the wind. They'll compete for the oldest trophy in international sports in the 33rd running of the event, which began in 1851. The silver trophy will either remain at the Societe Nautique de Geneve on the shores of Lake Geneva or be spirited back to America after a 15-year absence.

"If we win the America's Cup, I think it absolutely is worth it," Ellison said in an interview Friday at his team's base.

Associated Press

Continued on Page 14

NHL Roundup

Sharks bounce back to beat Blues 4-2

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Patrick Marleau scored his 38th goal of the season, remaining tied for the NHL lead, as the Western Conference-leading San Jose Sharks beat the St. Louis Blues 4-2 on Thursday. Ryane Clowe, Devin Setoguchi and Scott Nichol also scored for the Sharks, who bounced back from their lone regulation loss in the last 11 games. San Jose has 83 points, one behind Washington for first overall in the NHL.

Patrik Berglund had a goal and an assist, and Alex Steen also scored for the Blues, who have an NHL-worst nine home wins from 29 games.

Capitals 6, Rangers 5

In New York, Washington was pushed all the way by New York in a high-scoring thriller before extending its team-record winning streak to 12. Niclas Backstrom already had

four assists when he got to a loose puck near the left circle and snapped in his 24th goal of the season to complete the scoring in the third period. Capitals captain Alex Ovechkin had two goals and an assist to reach 500 career NHL points. He is the fifth player to reach the milestone in five seasons, doing it in only 373 games. Boyd Gordon, Mike Knuble, and defenseman Tom Poti added goals for the Capitals, who haven't lost in three weeks.

Vinny Prospal had two goals for New York, and newly acquired forward Olli Jokinen, Brandon Dubinsky, and Ryan Callahan also found the net for the Rangers, but they lost in regulation for the seventh time in eight games.

Senators 3, Canucks 1

In Ottawa, the hosts kept up their equally impressive

and more unlikely streak, notching an 11th straight win by downing Vancouver.

Jason Spezza scored his ninth goal in his last eight games while goalie Brian Elliott broke his own team record with his ninth straight win. Milan Michalek had a goal and an assist for the Senators. In Los Angeles, the hosts blew a three-goal lead in the third period before steadying to beat Anaheim, tying a franchise record with their eighth straight win.

Dustin Brown scored the go-ahead goal with 5:32 left, while Anze Kopitar had two goals and two assists and defenseman Jack Johnson had a goal and three assists for his first four-point game in the NHL.

Wayne Simmonds also scored as the Kings beat their neighbors for the fifth straight



time.

Jason Blake, Troy Bodie, Matt Beleskey and Ryan Carter netted for Anaheim.

In Nashville, Tennessee, Patrick Hornqvist had two power-play goals and an assist to lift Nashville over Colorado.

Jason Arnott had a goal and three assists for Nashville, Steve Sullivan added a power-play goal and an assist, and Joel Ward also netted for the Predators.

The Avalanche's goals came from Cody McLeod, Matt Duchene and Justin Mercier. In Columbus, Ohio, Columbus marked the coaching debut of Claude Noel by edging Dallas.

Noel was in charge for his first

NHL game after taking over for Ken Hitchcock, who was fired Wednesday after the Blue Jackets sagged this season after making their first trip to the playoffs in 2008-09.

Steve Mason had 22 saves, Anton Stralman scored and R.J. Umberger added an empty-netter while sliding on his front.

In other NHL games it was, Montreal 3, Boston 2, SO; Washington 6, N.Y. Rangers 5; Columbus 2, Dallas 1; Tampa Bay 5, N.Y. Islanders 2; Ottawa 3, Vancouver 1; San Jose 4, St. Louis 2; Nashville 5, Colorado 3; Minnesota 4, Edmonton 2; Los Angeles 6, Anaheim 4.

NBA Roundup

LeBron, Cavs beat Heat, win 10th straight

CLEVELAND (AP) — LeBron James scored 36 points — 17 on free throws — as the Cleveland Cavaliers ran their NBA winning streak to 10 with a 102-84 victory over the Miami Heat on Thursday. Daniel Gibson added 12 after joining the game in the second quarter. He arrived late after joining his pregnant fiancée who was hospitalized for precautionary reasons. James started at point guard for Gibson and added eight assists and seven rebounds. A one-on-one showdown between superstars James and Miami's Dwayne Wade never materialized as the Cavs controlled the game and attempted 36 free throws to 14 for Miami.

Wade finished with 24 points on 11 of 26 shooting and Michael Beasley had 21 for the Heat, which has dropped four straight. Miami was within eight after three quarters, but the Cavs outscored them 10-3 to open the fourth, taking a 91-76 lead. Wade tried to keep Miami close but didn't have as much help as James, who has adapted his game lately to fill the backcourt void. While James was able to draw fouls — he shot 21 free throws to 2 for Wade — his Miami counterpart wasn't able to get as many calls despite being knocked down on a few occasions. Twice, Wade ran into Shaquille O'Neal, his former Heat teammate, and found himself looking

at the ceiling without hearing a whistle. O'Neal added 13 points and eight rebounds in 21 minutes, yet another strong, efficient performance from the big man who has stepped his game up of late.

Trail Blazers 96, Spurs 93

In Portland, Oregon, Portland came from 10 points down in the fourth quarter to defeat San Antonio. LaMarcus Aldridge had 28 points and 13 rebounds for the Blazers. He hit a jumper with 2:54 left to give the Blazers the lead and Martell Webster dropped another 3 to make it 91-87 with 22.9 seconds to go. With the victory, Portland swept the three-game series over San Antonio this season. The Blazers have won their past

five against the Spurs.

Webster finished with 21 points and made all five of his 3-pointers.

Manu Ginobili's 21 points led the Spurs, who lost despite the return of guard Tony Parker, who missed the previous three games with an ankle sprain. Parker, who started, pounced on the Blazers early with 16 first-half points and 18 for the game. Portland remained without All-Star guard Brandon Roy, who continues to nurse a left hamstring injury. Roy, who is averaging 23.1 points, has missed 11 of the Blazers' last 12 games.

Portland coach Nate McMillan said before the game that he is hopeful Roy will return for Saturday's



Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James, center, shoots over Miami Heat forward Dorell Wright, left, and Udonis Haslem in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Feb. 4, 2010, in Cleveland. James scored 36 points in the Cavaliers' 102-86 victory.

Associated Press
game at home against the Los Angeles Lakers. □



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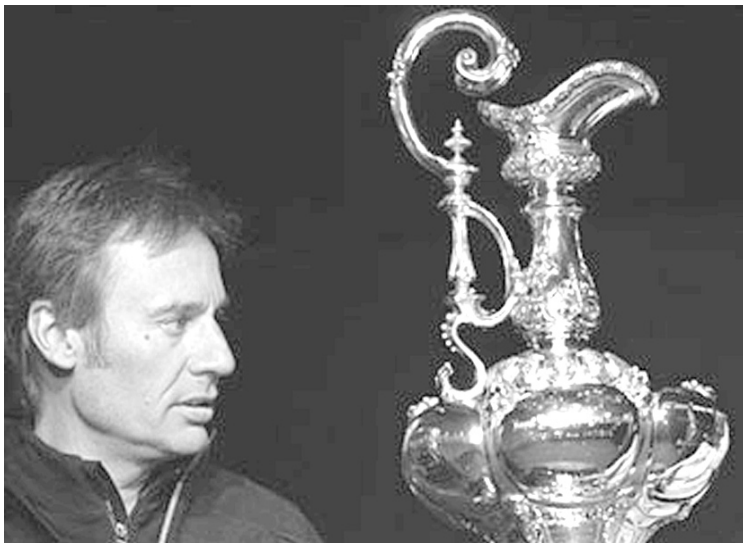
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Swiss President of the Alinghi racing team, Ernesto Bertarelli, stands next to the America's Cup trophy, which has arrived at Valencia, Spain, Friday Jan. 28, 2010, ahead of the start of the competition. The 33rd America's Cup is scheduled to start Feb. 8.

Associated Press

AMERICA'S CUP

Continued from Page 12

"It's the oldest trophy in sports. It hasn't been in the United States for a very, very long time, and we'd love to return the America's Cup to America."

While the court fight may have strengthened the perception that the America's Cup is a haven for egos run amok, it also led to the development of two of the fastest, most powerful sailboats ever built. USA will use a radical wing sail that towers 223 feet off

the deck and has flaps like an airplane wing. While the boats are mind-boggling, no one really knows what to expect.

"This will be quite possibly the most spectacular America's Cup ever, in some ways," said Paul Cayard, an American veteran of the America's Cup, Olympics and round-the-world races who will broadcast the races for Eurosport. "It could be a mismatch. It could be that one boat is just significantly faster than the other. This could very well be weather-dependent. Just because one boat is much faster on Monday doesn't mean the same boat will be faster on Wednesday if the conditions are different. "But the boats are technologically the most advanced sailboats ever built. The wing, for example, on BMW Oracle, is an incredible piece of

technology, something that I'm sure Boeing and Aerospatiale engineers would marvel at themselves." Money has been no object for either team in this nautical grudge match. Rough estimates are that each side has spent \$200 million on their campaigns, including on designers, engineers, boatbuilders, the sailors, and, of course, the high-priced lawyers and public relations people. The nasty spat between Ellison, the CEO of Oracle Corp., and Bertarelli started over the interpretation of the Deed of Gift, the 1887 document that governs the America's Cup. Because Alinghi and BMW Oracle Racing couldn't agree to rules for a conventional regatta involving several challengers sailing for the right to meet the defender, it defaulted to a rare head-to-head showdown, or Deed of Gift Match.

"It shouldn't be this hard to get a fair set of racing rules," Ellison said. "I regret we were forced into taking any court action at all. But we really were forced into it." Ellison said no one but Alinghi could win the America's Cup with the original set of rules proposed by Bertarelli's syndicate.

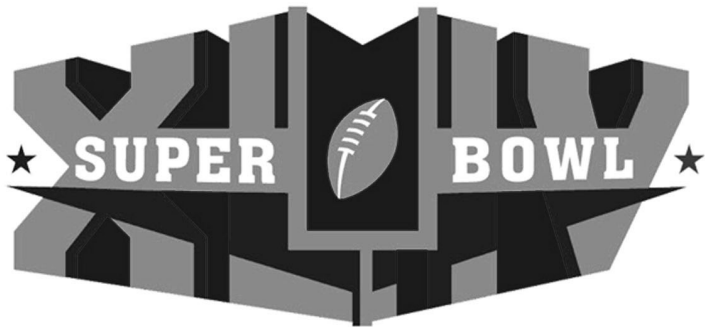
"Whoever heard of a sport where the umpire works for one the competitors? What he asked for was unprecedented, unsporting, and excuse me, but crazy," Ellison said. "And the court agreed with us."

There's also the Russell Coutts factor. Coutts won the America's Cup twice with his native New Zealand and then with Alinghi in 2003, helping the Swiss become the first European team to win sailing's biggest prize.

Coutts had a falling out with Bertarelli, was fired in 2004 and forced to sit out the 2007 America's Cup. Ellison hired Coutts as soon as possible, as skipper and CEO. □

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Super Bowl Facts and Figures

MIAMI (AP) — A glance at the National Football League Championship for the Vince Lombardi Trophy:

PARTICIPANTS — Indianapolis Colts (AFC) and New Orleans Saints (NFC). This is the fourth appearance for the Colts and the first appearance for the Saints.

SITE — Sun Life Stadium, Miami Gardens, Florida. This is the 10th Super Bowl played in Miami and the fifth at this stadium.

SEATING CAPACITY — 74,000.

WHEN — Sunday.

GAMETIME — 6 p.m. EST

NETWORK COVERAGE — The game will be distributed internationally by the NFL and NFL International to more than 185 countries and broadcast in 30 different languages.

PLAYERS SHARE — Winners: \$83,000 per man. Losers: \$42,000 per man.

PLAYER UNIFORMS — Indianapolis will be the home team and use the South sideline. The Colts have their choice of wearing its colored or white jersey.

SUDDEN DEATH — If the game is tied at regulation time 60 minutes, it will continue in sudden death overtime. The team scoring first (by safety, field goal, or touchdown) will win.

At the end of regulation playing time, the referee will immediately toss a coin at the center of the field, in accordance with rules pertaining to the usual pre-game toss. The captain of NFC team (the visiting team) will call the toss. Following a three-minute intermission after the end of the regular game, play will continue by 15-minute periods with a two-minute intermission between each such overtime period with no halftime intermission. The teams will change goals between each period, there will be a two-minute warning at the end of each period.

OFFICIAL TIME — The scoreboard clock will be official.

OFFICIALS — There will be seven officials and two alternates appointed by the Commissioner's office.

TROPHY — The winning team receives permanent possession of the Vince Lombardi Trophy, a sterling silver trophy created by Tiffany & Company and presented annually to the winner of the Super Bowl. The trophy was named after the late coach Vince Lombardi of the two-time Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers before the 1971 Super Bowl. The trophy is a regulation silver football mounted in a kicking position on a pyramid-like stand of three concave sides. The trophy stands 20¾ inches (53 centimeters) tall, weighs 6.7 pounds (3 kilograms) and is valued at more than \$25,000. The words "Vince Lombardi" and "Super Bowl XLIV" are engraved on the base along with the NFL shield.

ATTENDANCE — To date, 3,347,608 have attended Super Bowl games. The largest crowd was 103,985 at the 14th Super Bowl at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California. □



Workers replace a Pro Bowl banner with a Super Bowl banner outside Sun Life Stadium, the site of NFL football Super Bowl XLIV Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2010, in Miami.

Associated Press

Super Bowl: Colts will derail Saints' Super goal



The Vince Lombardi Trophy sits between the New Orleans Saints and Indianapolis Colts helmets before a news conference Friday, Feb. 5, 2010 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The New Orleans Saints will play the Indianapolis Colts in Super Bowl XLIV Sunday, Feb. 7, at Sun Life Stadium in Miami.

Associated Press

BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida (AP) — The New Orleans Saints and Indianapolis Colts are expected to pile on the points in Sunday's Super Bowl.

The Saints scored a league-high 510 points and ranked first in total offense. The Colts scored 416 and ranked ninth.

New Orleans has the league's most accurate quarterback, Drew Brees, throwing to a deep receiving corps led by 1,000-yard wideout Marques Colston. He has three dependable running backs, including the mercurial Reggie Bush. Both his tight ends, Jeremy Shockey and David Thomas, find holes in the middle of defenses and move the chains.

Indianapolis offers Peyton Manning, the only four-time league MVP, throwing to a deep group of targets led by two 1,000-yard receivers: Reggie Wayne and tight end Dallas Clark.

And while the Colts' defense has been stingy in the playoffs and the Saints force lots of turnovers, this could be a matchup that wears out the scoreboard at Sun Life Stadium.

Indianapolis, winner of the last Super Bowl in Miami three years ago, is a 5-point favorite.

"We have to be balanced and mix the run and the pass," Brees said. "We have to have a plan for their pass rush, because we know how they can rush the passer. Take care of the football, try to keep Peyton and that offense off the field as much as possible and take advantage of the opportunities when we get them."

"You can't be one-dimensional against these guys, because they are too smart for that. You have to be able to do both. If you can do it efficiently, possess the ball, convert third downs, keep them off the field, eat up the time of possession — all of those things that you talk about as an offense, that's the key for success."

Except that's not necessarily what the Saints do best. They are not a grind-it-out team. New Orleans had explosive plays this season from 75, 68, 66, 55, 54, 41, 37 and 36 yards. The Saints ranked sixth in yards rushing in 2009, but they've won 15 of their 18 games this season because of their passing prowess.

New Orleans allowed just 20 sacks during the season, but that's seven more than the Colts conceded. With defensive end Dwight Freeney, the Colts' primary pass rusher, ailing with ankle ligament damage, it could present Brees more opportunities to throw.

The matchups of Colts defensive backs Antoine Bethea, Melvin Bullitt, Kelvin Hayden, Jerraud Powers and Jacob Lacey against Colston, Robert Meachem, Devery Henderson, Shockey, Thomas, Bush and Pierre Thomas will be intriguing.

Still, the key to the game will be Manning against a vulnerable New Orleans defense. And that's the difference.

When New York Jets star Darrelle Revis, the best cover cornerback in the league, blanketed Wayne in the AFC title game, Manning looked elsewhere. Youngsters Pierre Garcon and Austin Collie were unstoppable. The Saints don't have a Revis, and their defense doesn't come close to matching what Indianapolis faced from the Jets and Baltimore Ravens.

Bottom line: Manning may be playing the best football of his sensational career — certainly good enough to win the Colts' second NFL championship in four seasons. □

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TEAM ARUBA's first race at US Street Nationals in Brandon, Florida



During the week of January 25th 2010, TEAM ARUBA traveled from their home base in Union, SC to Bradenton, Florida. On their way there they stopped near Orlando to pick up the driver of the www.Aruba.com Pro Stock Race car, Trevor Eman, who attends the University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando.

Page B4

At Occidental Grand Lucia & Salvatore tie the knot



OCCIDENTAL—On February 1, 2010, Lucia Sgandurra and Salvatore Moncada of Toronto, Canada vowed their love in matrimony.

Page B9

A new burst of creativity from Ateliers '89 is now on display

ORANJESTAD - Ateliers '89 is a foundation dedicated to the advancement of culture on Aruba. Artist Elvis Lopez is founder and president, and he regularly organizes free workshops with internationally recognized artists in all aspects of the arts, visual, literary, dramatic and performing. The latest 1 month class had a gala opening of their works on Thursday, February 4, and as is usually the case with the shows at Ateliers '89, the collection is evocative and provocative, leaving more than one observer reconsidering their interpretation of what constitutes "art".

The two instructors working with the classes over January were Martine Neddham, teaching "Virtual Persons," and Hermann Gabler, whose subject was "Stand-ins." Martine reports she is elated and more than a little surprised by what her students produced; works she considered had remarkable depth from a relatively young group, one student being only 13. Virtual



Persons required the class to construct an identity and how it determines a creation. The medium was completely up to the student, and the results were sculptures of odd objects, videos, collages, and a very interesting hand drawn installation by Philbert

Tromp titled "The Story of the First Pen on Earth," which demonstrates a remarkable talent for illustration.

Ateliers '89 is a bastion of the Avant-Garde on Aruba; the students are encouraged to go beyond the boundaries of what is conventionally defined

as art and explore deeply their psyche and powers of self-expression. The results of Hermann Gabler's "Stand-in" are fine examples of what is possible, forcing the viewers to contemplate the message and potential.

Continued on Page B3

RBTT voted "Best Bank" in St. Maarten



From left to right: Proudly displaying their "Best Bank in St. Maarten" certificate are Ms. Swinda Richardson, Manager of the Emmaplein Branch of RBTT; Mr. Wayne Kowlessar, President & Country Head RBTT Bank N.V.; and Ms. Josette Hunt, Assistant Manager Service & Support, RBTT Emmaplein Branch.

ORANJESTAD - Based on votes from the general public, RBTT Bank was named "Best Bank 2009" in St. Maarten, ahead of the five other commercial banks on the island. RBTT led the banking category in the Daily Herald's annual "The Best of St. Maarten 2009" survey that polls the general public. Commenting on the award, Wayne Kowlessar, Country Head, RBTT Bank St. Maarten, said: "We have placed renewed focus on delivering exceptional service and this award tells us that our customers are beginning to reap the rewards of our efforts. We congratulate our staff on this achievement and thank our clients for their vote of confidence."

For several years now, The Daily Herald has showcased the best that St. Maarten has to offer through its yearly survey which seeks readers' opinions on several categories including food; drinks and restaurants; goods and services; and people. RBTT was also winner of the "Best Bank" award in 2003. □

Fishes & More showcases the best seafood entrees

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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

Restaurant
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Monday - Sat 6 pm - 11
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For more information or to
make reservations, please
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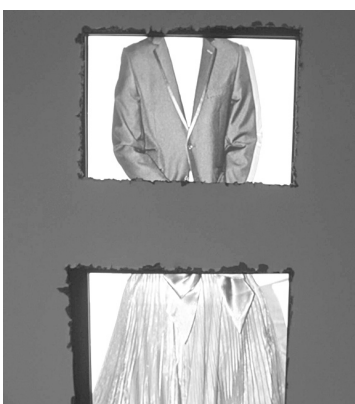
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A new burst of creativity from Ateliers '89 is now on display



Continued from Page B1

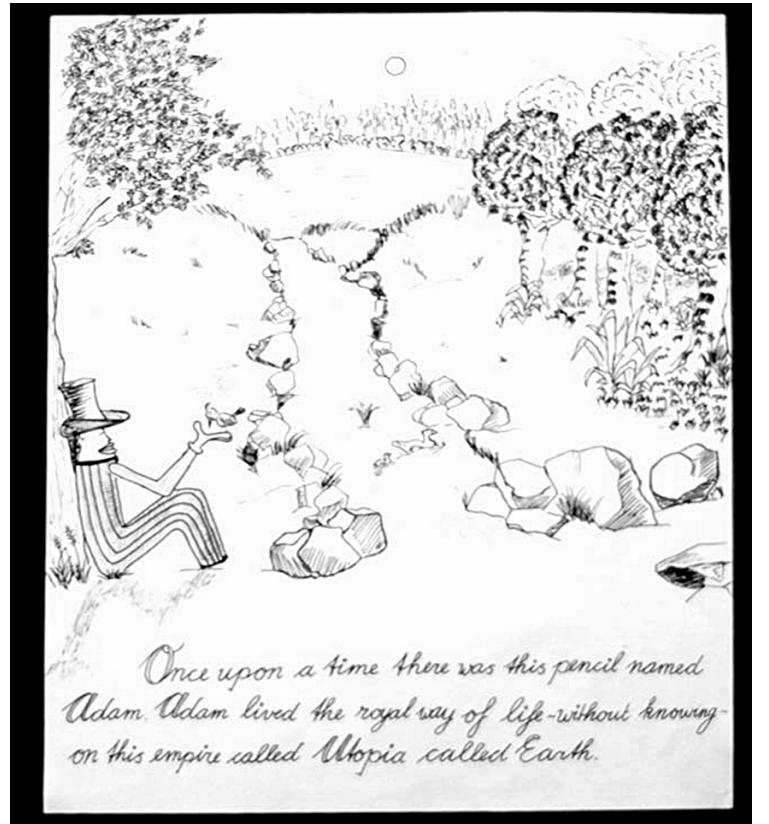
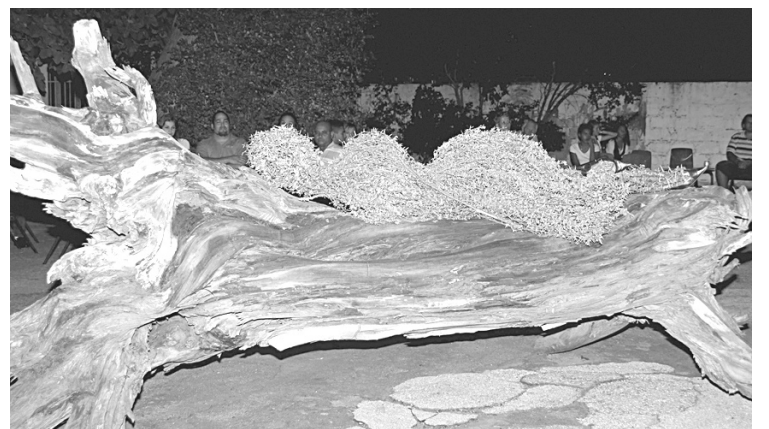
Such art produces very different results from one observer to the next, as each person brings their own experience and emotions to how they interpret the work. One large piece by Karl Goedgedrag uses foil covered with what appears to be dirt, and, when studied, appears not only differently from various angles, but also reveals intricate patterns within the work. Initially one may see



a tree trunk; from another angle, a pair of overturned legs, or even a Madonna and Child can be found among the folds of foil.

Again, Ateliers '89 has brought forth the message of unconfined artistic expression; how important it is to not limit imagination and encourage non-conformity. The current class included some well-known island artists such as Eefje van der Straten-Twillert and Miriam d'Lisle, both of them producing works that were in stark contrast to those for which they are best known, demonstrating their ability and willingness to expand and grow as artists. Martine commented on the show, "This was a great experience for me, to facilitate this creativity, and see how they responded, especially in a class so young. I think it isn't always the task of the art teacher to impart knowledge, but to empower. I am very proud of the results."

Ateliers '89 can be visited daily from 9:00 AM until 6:00. The current show will be on display until the finish of the next workshop, which begins on February 22 and ends March 18. Classes are 4 nights a week from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, Monday through Thursday. The coming classes will be "Drawing & Music" with Jonas Ohlsson and "Painting & Sound" with Daniela Bershan. To inscribe for the free workshops, call Elvis Lopez at 588-5776 or 565-4613. For more information visit their website: www.ateliers89.com.



TEAM ARUBA's first race at US Street Nationals in Brandenton, Florida



During the week of January 25th 2010, TEAM ARUBA traveled from their home base in Union, SC to Bradenton, Florida. On their way there they stopped near Orlando to pick up the driver of the www.Aruba.com Pro Stock Race car, Trevor Eman, who attends

the University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando. At the Bradenton track testing started on Tuesday the 26th of January 2010.

The race car and motor were completely revised during the off-season. The race motor went to Jon Kaase Race

Engines, Inc. and the racecar went to Rick Jones Race Cars, Inc. On Friday, January 29th the US Street Nationals started at the Bradenton speedway. TEAM ARUBA participated at this race, although they were not supposed to, as all other racecars which TEAM

ARUBA competed against, were running with either big engines, NOS (Nitrous oxide systems), Turbo or Superchargers. Even so, Trevor managed to qualify # 5 with a 4.10 ET running the 1/8th mile. During eliminations Trevor went to the semi-finals

losing with a 4.08 sec. against his competitor that ran a 4.07 sec. It was a close side-by-side run. After the official races were over, there was an opportunity to test, but this time the 1/4 mile. This is where TEAM ARUBA surprised everyone.

Trevor ran the 1/4 mile in 6.26 sec. with a top speed of 223.99 m/ph. This puts the www.Aruba.com car in 2nd place for the miles per hour record in the Mountain Motor Pro Stock category, without nitrous, turbo charger or supercharger. In first place is Brian Gahm with a speed of 223.95 m/ph (record set Sept. 2007) and in first place for "elapsed time" (ET) is Frank Gugliotta with a 6.251 sec. ET (record set Oct. 2008). TEAM ARUBA will participate in 15 races this year and also will participate at the AUTISM SPEAKS Walk in Charlotte, NC at the Nascar track (Lowe's Motor Speedway).



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TEAM ARUBA is ready to compete this year against competitors in the ADRL as well as the new association called MMPSA (Mountain Motor Pro Stock Association). TEAM ARUBA's goal is not only to win a World Championship, but moreover to continue to promote their island ARUBA, by talking to people of the USA "one-on-one", meaning on a personal basis. TEAM ARUBA would like to thank the people of Aruba for their support and would like them to know that they will continue to promote Aruba abroad with pleasure and pride. □

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Animal Rights Aruba continues to grow



Animal Rights Aruba

doing, about becoming a volunteer and about donations can be found on its website www.animalrightsaruba.com. We shall keep you updated on the ARA's projects and

ORANJESTAD - A fresh breeze is blowing through the Animal Rights Aruba foundation (ARA). Five new board members are filled with renewed enthusiasm and determination to become a driving force. The foundation's goals are to relieve suffering and hardship for the island's animal population. Affordable spaying and neutering of pets is high on the list of the ARA, as is a program for education and implementation. An image boost and new targets and goals belong to the near future. The ARA board members ask for a little patience to get everything running smoothly. One of the many goals of the ARA is to help find good homes for abandoned pets, who find a temporary shelter at the ARA property. As of the moment there is regrettably limited space for these animals, so it is therefore not always possible for the ARA to take care of the dogs or cats that people are calling about. Moreover, there is not much adoption demand for our adult and elderly animals, so these are also taken care of on a daily basis.

More information about the good work that the ARA is



progress in the various areas on. The ARA's e-mail address that the foundation is working is ara@setarnet.aw. □

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Aruba also invited

Special Olympic athletes to compete in Puerto Rico

PHILIPSBURG--Twenty Special Olympics(SO)athletes from St. Maarten will travel to San Juan, Puerto Rico later this month to compete in the inaugural Special Olympics Latin America Games. The host country has also

invited the government of St. Maarten to attend. This will be the largest batch of SO athletes to compete in a regional competition, SO President First Lady Angela Richards-Huggins told The Daily Herald. An estimated

1,000 athletes from several countries are expected to compete.

The local team along with a seven-member SO delegation will travel to Puerto Rico from February 18 – 28. Local athletes – an eight-person aquatics team; eight-person athletic team and four-person bocce team - will compete in track and field, swimming and bocce.

Twelve of the athletes were drawn from the Prins Willem Alexander School for Special Education (PWAS) and eight are from the Sr. Basilia Center.

The athletes have been training intensively over the past four months for the competition and SO officials are confident that they will perform well and return with several medals. The First Lady and SO Sports Director Les Brown say the competition is an important one for athletes to not only garner experience in



a regional competition but to also get some exposure and enjoy themselves.

"It's a good feeling to know that we can send 20 athletes to this competition," says Richards-Huggins.

International coordinators say the competition is the "utmost regional Olympics" event in Latin America. Countries/islands invited to compete are Aruba, Bahamas, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Cayman Islands,

Montserrat, St. Kitts/Nevis, St. Lucia, Suriname, US Virgin Islands, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panamá, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, USA, Spain, Italy, Greece, South Africa, Austria and Spain. Other sporting activities are bowling, football 5, rhythm gymnastics, power lifting, tennis, triathlon and softball.



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	daily: 7:00	9:00		
	late show: 11:00			
R	UP IN THE AIR			
	daily: 6:00	8:45		
	late show: 11:15			
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"			
	daily: 4:00	2:00		
	matinee: 12:00			
PG	TOOTH FAIRY			
	daily: 4:15	6:30	9:00	
	matinee: 1:45		late show: 11:30	
PG	LEAP YEAR			
	daily: 4:45			
	matinee: 12:15	2:30		
R	LEGION			
	daily: 4:15	6:30	8:45	
	matinee: 1:45		late show: 11:15	
PG-13	AVATAR 3D			3D
	daily: 4:30	7:45		
	matinee: 1:15		late show: 11:00	

AT PASEO HERENCIA				
PG-13	DEAR JOHN			NEW
	daily: 6:00	8:30		
	matinee: 1:00	3:30	late show: 11:00	
PG-13	INVICTUS			
	daily: 6:00	8:45		
	matinee: 12:00	3:00	late show: 11:30	
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"			
	daily: 4:15	2:00		
	matinee: 12:00			
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG			
	daily: 4:45	2:30		
	matinee: 12:15			
PG-13	IT'S COMPLICATED			
	daily: 6:30	9:00		
	late show: 11:30			
R	THE BOOK OF ELI			
	daily: 6:15	9:00		
	matinee: 12:30	3:15	late show: 11:45	
PG-13	AVATAR 3D			3D
	daily: 4:45	8:00		
	matinee: 1:30		late show: 11:15	
R	NINE			
	daily: 7:00	9:30		
	late show: 12:00			

Matinee: sat - sun | Late show: fri & sat

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St. Maarten's Findlay qualifies for Optimist Sailing Championships

CURACAO--St. Maarten's Rhône Findlay will represent the Netherlands Antilles at both the North and South America Optimist Sailing Championships later this year. Findlay earned the right sailing in the Curaçao Youth Optimist Championships this past weekend. Findlay competed in 11 one-hour long races in three days in less than ideal conditions. Waves two to 2.5 meters swamped many boats and winds ranging from up to 33 knots caused many of the young sailors to capsize.

"Rhône suffered some bad luck and was capsized by freak waves often, but righted himself and bailed out to continue without hesitation ending the regatta in ninth place," said Findlay's father who helped on the race safety boat so had a close up view. Findlay finished the regatta in ninth place out of 15. He qualified as one of five to go to Uruguay in March and one of the nine to go to Canada in June to represent the Netherlands Antilles.

As the Optimist A division



toughed it out in open seas, the younger sailors in the B and C category raced on the calmer more protected inner sections of Spanish Waters.

St. Maarten fielded two of its

most promising youngsters in the B group. Representing the Friendly Island were 9-year-old Ilian Halbertsma and 7-year-old Nathan Smith.

Curacao's 11-year-old Camiel

Voight won the B group which consisted of eight sailors. Halbertsma finished second and was followed by Smith in third place just two points behind. □

Election expected around mid-June

WILLEMSTAD--In all probability the elections for the Island Council to become the new Parliament of Country Curaçao will be held somewhere mid-June. In the political corridors in Willemstad there is talk of June 11 or 18. One of the reasons to hold the elections in June is that many families will be spending their holidays abroad during the school vacation in July/August. To hold the elections after the holidays would be too late, as the Island Territories Curaçao and St. Maarten will acquire the status of country per October 10. This explains the serious consideration to hold the elections in June. However, this would imply that the nomination for the elections should take place the required sixty days before, which is sometime in April. The latter is only a few weeks after the new Central Government and Antillean Parliament will have taken office. The election would also be less than six months after the recent parliamentary elections of January 22. The Island Council is yet to take a final decision on the election date. With the shifting of the central point of government administration, due to the massive transfer of tasks and authorities of the Central Government to the Island Territories, the position of those Island Territories will fundamentally change, hence the importance of holding elections. During the Political Steering Committee Constitutional Changes of July 24, 2009, Curaçao and St. Maarten had indicated that it would be advisable to hold snap elections at island-level in view of the preparation for country status, in connection with the way content is given to the representative entities at the start of the new constitutional relations. Holding snap elections of the Island Council also plays a role in the realisation of the Constitutions for the new countries Curaçao and St. Maarten. One of the conditions stipulates that the draft constitution should be determined by an island ordinance and be accepted by a two-thirds majority votes. If the draft is accepted with a majority less than two-thirds of the cast votes, the Island Council should be dissolved and a new Island Council elected. That newly elected Island Council could then accept the draft constitution with a normal majority if needed. The federal ordinance for amendment of the Islands Regulation Netherlands Antilles ERNA that should enable the Island Councils of the Island Territories Curaçao and St. Maarten to be dissolved separately and prematurely (Transition arrangement early elections Island Councils Curaçao and St. Maarten) will be discussed in the Central Committee of the Antillean Parliament next week. □



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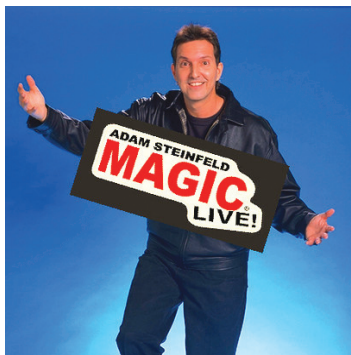
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PALM BEACH - STEINFELD presents WOW factor! at the MAGIC LIVE!® ...theater-of-illusions show, Westin - Aruba opened on December 25 at 9PM. MAGIC Live!® theater-of-illusions show, starring Adam Steinfeld... is an amazing night of Magic, Grand Illusions and Comedy, superb magic at it's

highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live! theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage.

In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

then the sections are taken away, one by one, until the girl vanishes completely... right before your eyes!

Then as if that isn't enough to run to your local optometrist, he re-assembles the box for the magicbabe to make a triumphant reappearance. It's an all new original illusion not seen anywhere else in the world.

I went back to see the show during rehearsals, and still couldn't figure out the secret.

Tourists and local fans will remember Steinfeld for past performances, in Aruba,



and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new england mystery writer

Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film.

The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach, Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX

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SEE MAGIC, comedy and "seemingly impossible feats, get ready to marvel at the all new, MAGIC! theater-of-illusions show starring ADAM STEINFELD, opens DECEMBER, 25, nightly 9PM at the WESTIN, aruba. MAGIC LIVE! theater-of-illusions show...at the WESTIN-Aruba, 9pm nightly, starring AdamSteinfeld. □



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Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm
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Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.5 adults
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Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: "From the pier to your plate!"

ORANJESTAD - The downtown marina is home of Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood in Oranjestad.

Driftwood owner Herby Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing. A fisherman who knows about fish, what our local waters have to offer, and what the words



"fresh seafood" really mean. What Herby catches will be served in his restaurant on

the same day. Herby loves to share his fishing passion with the many visitors to the island. His fleet of a 35 ft. Twin Engine Bertram yacht and a 50 ft. Twin Engine Post yacht, appropriately called "Driftwood I and II, is available for charters on a daily basis from 8am to

Catch your own dinner

12 noon and from 1pm to 5pm. A charter includes: captain, mate, all fishing equipment, bait, sodas and bottled water. On a full day charter sandwiches and snacks are also included. You can call Herby directly at (297) 592 4040 or go to www.driftwoodaruba.com.

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\$760- full day

Rates per boat

Max. 6 people



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Driftwood Restaurant

This authentic Aruban seafood restaurant is located in characteristic downtown Oranjestad. Their extended

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Driftwood Restaurant

Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant

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www.driftwoodaruba.com

Opening hours: every day, but Tuesdays from 5pm till 10:30pm.



At Occidental Grand

Lucia & Salvatore tie the knot



OCCIDENTAL—On February 1, 2010, Lucia Sgandurra and Salvatore Moncada of Toronto, Canada vowed their love in matrimony.

The lovebirds met through work September 2006. The moment their eyes met it was an instant attraction. Salvatore and Lucia always knew that their love was strong and during dating they spoke about marriage often. On Lucia's birthday, December 15, 2008, Salvatore escorted her to the jewelers to pick out the forever ring.

The wedding planning included a destination wedding and after Lucia did research on islands Aruba came highly recommended.

The wedding day took place beside the pristine shores of Occidental Grand Aruba Resort. Wedding coordinator, Kimberly Dammerman orchestrated the enchanted evening to the last detail of perfection. The evening was perfect with Lucia glowing with love and Salvatore by her side gazing at her beauty. The sermon was delivered by Officiate Robert Gibson and witnessed by their lovely 8 month daughter Enza and Lucia's parents Josie & Frank Sarta. The newlyweds toasted to a forever love and cut the wedding cake at sunset.



Following the ceremony Bella Aruba Photography took the newlyweds for a 'Once in a Lifetime photo shoot.' Salvatore and Lucia are leaving Aruba today to start their happily ever after life

in the city of North York, Ontario.

Congratulations from Occidental Grand and Aruba Today!!!

Photos by Angela Munzenhofer



St. Dominic teenagers complete Girl Power



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Deborah and Dick Miller

Photo by Diane Keijzer

SOUTH REWARD--Some forty St. Dominic High School girls graduated from the St. Maarten AIDS Foundation-sponsored three-day Girl Power programme on Thursday. The programme aims to building self-esteem, self-empowerment and self values in young girls. The programme, which is operated in collaboration with Sector Health Care Affairs, with the motto "I refuse to engage in activities that can negatively change my life goals" focuses on empowering girls in the age group 13-18 with the

knowledge to relay the values acquired to their peers. Facilitator Cassilda van der Neut noted that many young girls have difficulty discussing certain issues pertaining to sexuality with their parents. Through the workshop facilitators empower and encourage the girls to become comfortable in having such conversations with their parents. "We are very open; we allow them to ask questions and allow them to be down to earth about sexuality, self-esteem and self worth," said Van der Neut. "We balance information, so that they have a feeling about what is out there and they are able to prepare themselves not only for today, but also for the future. We discuss how their behaviour patterns can hinder their long-time goals." Van der Neut noted that it had been decided to host the workshop during this period prior to the carnival season, when many young girls become vulnerable in the excitement of the period. "We want to carry out the programme right through carnival, instilling

in the girls respect for their bodies," she said. Facilitating the workshops were a psychologist, retirees, Sector Health Care representatives, peer educators and business community employees who were trained on the content of the Girl Power programme this year. An arrangement was made with employers to have their employees contribute their time to this worthy cause. Peer educator Shandrika Arrindell (14), who graduated from the programme two years ago, assisted in facilitating the workshops as a community service project. Commenting on her experience as a peer facilitator Arrindell said, "I decided to help out and make the experience wonderful for the other girls as well, so that they can learn from my experiences and be impacted in such a positive way as I was. Being honest with them will help them to make the right decisions." The Girl Power programme will be carried out next at Learning Unlimited High School and thereafter at St. Maarten Academy PSVE

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Stocks pull out of slump but end week lowerBy **STEPHEN BERNARD**
and **TIM PARADIS,**
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — A battered stock market recovered from a sharp drop in late trading Friday but still posted its fourth straight weekly drop.

The Dow Jones industrials, down nearly 170 points in afternoon trading, clawed their way back to finish with a gain of 10. But more stocks fell than rose on the New York Stock Exchange as investors contended with another series of troubling signals about the global economy. Investors are concerned that European governments will have trouble getting their massive deficits under control. The Labor Department, meanwhile, offered only scant hope of improvement in the jobs market in its closely watched monthly report.

“Clearly we’ve entered the worry, fear camp,” said Rob Lutts, president and chief investment office at Cabot Money Management. “It’s a very fragile investor psychology today. It doesn’t take much ... to send them running for the hills.”

The Federal Reserve also said during afternoon trading that consumers borrowed less for an 11th straight month in December but that total borrowing fell far less than expected. The drop of \$1.8 billion was less than the decline of \$9 billion analysts had expected. That fueled hopes that consumer spending will increase. The market pulled off its lows in the last hour of trading as the dollar came off its highs. A rising dollar hurts commodity prices, which become more expensive for foreign buyers when the dollar climbs.

But for the second straight day, there was unsettling economic news. On Thursday, the Dow fell 268 on growing worries about the global economy.

The U.S. unemployment rate unexpectedly fell in January to 9.7 percent from 10 percent, the government reported, even though analysts expected an uptick. At the same time, however, employers cut 20,000 jobs, more than the 5,000 economists expected, according to Thomson Reuters. The two numbers are calculated from different surveys.

Timothy Speiss, head of Eisner LLP’s Personal Wealth Advisors group, said the improving unemployment rate was a good sign, but that investors are well aware that the problems in the economy that have stocks falling in recent weeks are still there.

The jobs report came as more troubling news emerged in Europe that Portugal and other weak economies were falling behind in their efforts to control their deficits.

Portugal’s opposition parties defeated

a government austerity plan Friday and passed their own bill allowing the country’s autonomous regions to rack up even more debt. That raised new questions about European countries’ ability to control their swollen budget deficits, which are undermining faith in the region’s euro currency. Greece and Spain are also grappling with massive budget deficits. The worries about Europe are another bullet point for investors who for weeks have been concerned in recent weeks about China’s efforts to keep growth in check as well as plans in Washington to place more restrictions on big banks.

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow rose 10.05, or 0.1 percent, to 10,012.23 after being down as much as 167 points. For the week, the Dow lost 0.5 percent.

The broader Standard & Poor’s 500 index rose 3.08, or 0.3 percent, to 1,066.19 and ended down 0.7 percent for the week. The S&P 500 index hasn’t fallen four straight weeks since March 2009.

The Nasdaq composite index rose 15.69, or 0.7 percent, to 2,141.12. It lost 0.3 percent for the week.

About three stocks fell for every two that rose on the NYSE, where volume came to 1.6 billion shares compared with 1.5 billion Thursday.

The late-day turnaround may have been the result of a defensive move by short sellers, or investors who bet that a stock will fall in value, said Christian Bendixen, director of technical research at Bay Crest Partners in New York.

When stocks turn higher, short sellers can be pressured to quickly unwind their positions to limit future losses. To do that, they have to buy shares, which can push the stock price up even more in what’s known as a “short squeeze.”

“I think there was a little bit of a short squeeze,” Bendixen said.

“People started getting nervous that the selloff was too quick. They went from extremely bullish to extremely bearish.”

Still, Bendixen said many investors dumped risky assets heading into the weekend amid worries about the global economy, including growing fears of a debt crisis in Europe.

“It almost feels a little bit like 2008 when no one wanted to hold risk over the weekend because you didn’t know what news would come out on Monday,” he said.

The Labor Department revised some of its past statistics lower, but analysts said there were some encouraging signs. The number of average hours worked and hourly pay both improved, as did the number of employers adding temporary workers. The hiring of temporary employees usually precedes companies adding permanent jobs during a recovery. □



Michael Omara, a trader with Barclays, reacts as he looks at a trading monitor on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Friday Feb. 5, 2010. Stocks fell modestly Friday following mixed news from the Labor Department’s monthly employment report.

(AP Photos/Bebeto Matthews)

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Ministro Defensa Colombia buscará afianzar cooperación con EEUU



Imagen de archivo del ministro de Defensa de Colombia, Gabriel Silva, habla en una conferencia de prensa en Bogotá. 27 enero 2010. REUTERS/Handout/Javier Casella

BOGOTA (Reuters) - El ministro de Defensa de Colombia, Gabriel Silva, dijo el viernes que viajará a Washington para afianzar la cooperación con Estados Unidos y convencer a un grupo de congresistas de que el país sudamericano es el mejor aliado estratégico en América Latina.

El viaje, previsto para la próxima semana, se producirá después de que el Gobierno del presidente Barack Obama anunció un recorte de la ayuda económica que entrega anualmente a Colombia para programas de cooperación en la lucha contra el narcotráfico.

Washington es el principal aliado de Colombia en la lucha contra el narcotráfico y los grupos armados ilegales y desde el año 2000 ha entregado a Bogotá más de 5.000 millones de dólares en asistencia militar y social.

Pero la ayuda económica ha ido disminuyendo progresivamente en medio de la crisis financiera global que ha afectado a la mayor economía del mundo.

“Colombia es el mejor aliado y el mejor socio de la política exterior de los Estados Unidos en América Latina y ha mostrado unos resultados que lo vuelven definitivo en la cooperación regional en la lucha contra el narcotráfico, el narcoterrorismo y la seguridad urbana”, dijo Silva.

“Queremos ir al Congreso para que los congresistas entiendan lo que estamos haciendo”, explicó el funcionario a periodistas.

El ministro dijo que la cooperación bilateral con Estados Unidos es más importante que la ayuda económica y que así lo demuestra el acuerdo firmado en el 2009 que permite a militares estadounidenses utilizar siete bases en el país sudamericano para combatir el narcotráfico y el terrorismo.

Silva reveló que en la actualidad la ayuda económica

de Estados Unidos sólo representa alrededor de un cinco por ciento del total que se invierte en seguridad y defensa anualmente.

“Nosotros nunca hemos dependido del dinero de Estados Unidos, con o sin dinero de Estados Unidos hemos hecho la tarea y la seguiremos haciendo”, aseguró el funcionario que lidera la lucha contra la guerrilla izquierdista y el narcotráfico en este país azotado por un conflicto interno de más de 45 años.

El ministro admitió que actualmente en el Gobierno Obama existe una actitud receptiva y de cooperación con Colombia y que el objetivo es lograr una situación similar en el Congreso.

Colombia se convirtió en un aliado clave y estratégico de Estados Unidos en América Latina en momentos en que gobernantes de izquierda como el presidente de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, han ganado protagonismo en la región con su discurso contra Washington. □

Chávez acusa a EEUU y Canadá de atacar su gobierno

CARACAS (AP) - El presidente Hugo Chávez acusó el viernes a los gobiernos de Estados Unidos y Canadá de atacar a su gobierno y apoyar a grupos opositores, encabezados por estudiantes universitarios, para generar violencia en Venezuela.

“Desde Washington y desde Canadá atacan a Venezuela porque estamos resueltos a impedir la violencia”, declaró el mandatario durante una reunión en el palacio presidencial, transmitida por la televisora estatal VTV. Según el gobernante, “Estados Unidos está a favor de este plan de generar violencia en Venezuela y junto a ellos, el gobierno de la ultraderecha canadiense y otros gobiernos del continente”.

Chávez también rechazó los comentarios del embajador de Estados Unidos en Brasil, Thomas Shannon, quien pidió en la víspera al gobierno de Venezuela a abstenerse de reprimir a las manifestaciones opositoras.

“Por ahí salió el embajador de Estados Unidos, el señor Shannon, llegando a Brasil y lanzando ahora desde Brasilia sus dardos contra Venezuela”, señaló.

Shannon, al referirse a las protestas estudiantiles, en declaraciones a periodistas en Brasilia, le aconsejó “al gobierno de Venezuela, no reprimir”, y en lugar de eso “abrir espacio para oír al pueblo venezolano”.

Venezuela denunció el jueves que en Estados Unidos se intentan nuevamente “criminalizar” al gobierno de Chávez, en referencia a un informe del director de Inteligencia Nacional estadounidense, Dennis Blair, que colocó al país latinoamericano en una lista de naciones donde la democracia y las políticas de mercado están en riesgo. En un comunicado difundido por el Ministerio de Información y Comunicación, la embajada de Venezuela en Washington criticó que en el informe anual sobre las amenazas a Estados Unidos se acuse a Chávez de “reducir la libertad de expresión y las actividades de la oposición al cerrar medios informativos independientes, hostigar y detener a manifestantes y amenazar a líderes opositores con cargos penales de corrupción”. □

Uribe vuelve a esquivar tema de reelección

BOGOTA (AP) - El presidente Alvaro Uribe expresó el viernes que defiende la reelección pero de su llamada política de “seguridad democrática” o combate a grupos armados ilegales. El mandatario esquivó así una vez más pronunciarse claramente si buscará o no un tercer cuatrienio de gobierno, una segunda reelección que constitucionalmente tiene prohibida.

Se espera que un alto tribunal se pronuncie sobre si da luz verde o niega la legalidad de una ley, aprobada a fines del 2009, para realizar un referendo en el que los colombianos decidan si quieren modificar la Carta Magna y permitir esa segunda reelección.

“He venido defendiendo una reelección: la reelección de la política de ‘Seguridad Democrática’”, dijo Uribe en una entrevista con la radio La X, de la ciudad de Cali, al suroeste del país.

Y sobre la postura de la Corte Constitucional que analiza la ley sobre el referendo, Uribe aseguró que como presidente su contribución era “la prudencia para aportar al tranquilo discurrir de nuestras instituciones”. □

Argentina protesta por actividad petrolera británica en Malvinas

BUENOS AIRES (AP) - Argentina volvió a manifestar el viernes su enérgica protesta por el inicio de actividades de exploración de petróleo y gas por parte del Reino Unido en las aguas que rodean a las islas Malvinas (Falklands), cuya soberanía se disputan ambos países.

“La exploración petrolera en aguas de la soberanía argentina afecta nuestros intereses y vamos a defender por todos los medios legales y diplomáticos nuestros derechos”, dijo a APTN el canciller argentino Jorge Taiana.

“Está claro que ellos quieren ocultar la naturaleza del problema que es que hay una disputa de soberanía, que el Reino Unido se niega a participar de la mesa de negociación... mientras no se siente a una negociación, Argentina persistirá en su reclamo pacífico y en la defensa de sus derechos e intereses”, añadió.

El último cruce diplomático se desató el martes cuando Taiana citó a la máxima autoridad de la embajada británica en Buenos Aires para entregarle nota formal con “la más enérgica protesta” por el inicio de las actividades de perforación hidrocarburífera al norte del archipiélago.

En la misiva, el gobierno argentino remarcó que esta acción “es incompatible con lo establecido por las resoluciones de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas que reconocen la existencia de la disputa de soberanía... e insta a los gobiernos de la República Argentina y del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte a que reanuden las negociaciones a fin de encontrar a la mayor brevedad posible una solución pacífica”. □



El canciller Jorge Taiana, derecha, abraza a su par brasileño Celso Amorim, después de una conferencia de prensa en Buenos Aires, el viernes 5 de febrero de 2010. Taiana dijo que Argentina expresó una enérgica protesta ante Gran Bretaña por el inicio de actividades de exploración de petróleo y gas en las islas Malvinas (Falklands). (AP Photo/Natasha Pisarenko)

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